

West Cliff House Owners' Association

2024 AGM Minutes - Saturday 13th April 2024 1.30pm (Salt House)

Present:

Owners of 33 properties were present in the room, two were present on Zoom, three had given their proxy vote to the chair and six had expressed their voting preferences and asked a committee member to vote on their behalf.

Apologies

Three owners had sent their apologies without voting.

1. Notes from 2023 AGM

This meeting was inquorate and owners were presented with notes from the discussions. One owner queried the reported income from subscriptions as this wasn't a multiple of either £100 or £125.

Action: owner to meet with the treasurer to go through the receipts

2. Committee report on Association activities

a. Maintenance programme

The committee is in the process of putting together a costed 10-15 year estate maintenance plan. Indicative costs have been received from Max Lewis regarding road repairs and we are waiting for costs in relation to potential drain repair / replacement. The plan is informed by a walk-round carried out by a number of the committee and will endeavour to prioritise works over a 10-15 year period. The plan will be used to set subscription fees going forward.

The committee estimates that between £250k-£300k of works may be required in the next 15 years. This is based on the following assumptions:

- 1555 linear metres at an average of 5 metres wide giving 7,775 m²
- Current cost is £28 per m² giving a current cost of approx. £217,700
- This figure needs to be increased each year to allow for inflation so we should assume at least £250,000 to be spent
- To this we need to add a provision for drains – a minimum of £50k is assumed whilst we wait for a better estimate
- At least 125 of the 131 houses pay,

On this calculation, which doesn't allow for many other costs, subscriptions would need to be at least £160 per property per year in today's money for 15 years. It would also be prudent to have some contingency funds.

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One owner expressed a wish to have something more tangible than estimates. However it was pointed out by other owners that it is hard to predict with any more certainty than this what could go wrong and that we cannot plan for the unexpected therefore the figures above are probably as good as we can expect.

One owner commented that our subscription fee of £125 is incredibly cheap for a private estate. This is due in part to the significant amount of time the committee put in voluntarily i.e. at no cost to owners. If the estate was managed by a management company, the maintenance costs would be significantly more.

Action; all owners were asked to submit their thoughts on the priorities as indicated in the outline plan circulated with the AGM papers and attached as an appendix.

b. Update on DMMOs

The chair reported that responses to both DMMO applications have been submitted and that everyone needs to wait for the council to notify its decisions. The Chair suggested that it is highly likely that, whatever the council's decision, there will be appeals and therefore the issues could rumble on for many years.

One owner queried the legitimacy of signs put up by neighbouring land owners. Trustees confirmed that they have flagged up misleading information as part of their evidence submission opposing the DMMO applications.

3. Treasurer's Report

a. *Revised rulebook*

The Treasurer explained that this item was under this agenda heading as it formed part of his report.

The view of the committee is that the 2013 rulebook is out of date. It is not sufficiently comprehensive and doesn't include some basic issues such as how to deal with inquorate meetings. The treasurer confirmed that most feedback had been incorporated into the draft distributed to owners. Owners were asked for comments on the draft.

Clause 5b (ii)

One owner queried what was behind the inclusion of this clause – whether it was fear of something happening or opportunistic. Lindsey explained that this clause is in the deeds of many houses and that including it in the rulebook would help ensure all owners are being treated the same. It would enable trustees to take action should something detrimental to the estate be instigated.

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Clause 14

Allows the treasurer or chair to approve spending up to £1,000. One owner thought this was too high and should be reduced to £250.

b. Update on financial position and how subscriptions have been used

Finance papers had been sent out in advance of the meeting. The treasurer gave an update now that we have reached year-end. The final accounts show a surplus of £3185.75 and the current bank balance is £28,430.48.

Income of £12350 came from 124 subscriptions for 2023-24 plus a further income of £800 from an easement.

Expenditure is largely road maintenance plus Zoom subscription, gardening, insurance, printing, venue hire etc).

The Treasurer will make the accounts available if any owner wishes to inspect them. The accounts are still to be audited.

One owner queried the income from subscriptions figure. The Treasurer confirmed that in 2022-23 there were four non-payers. This increased to six in 2023-24. The non-payers – two have recently passed away, two holiday lets and two persistent non-payers.

One owner queried whether the holiday let owners are in contravention of their deeds, many of which carry a clause preventing the use of houses on the estate for business use.

Owners were reminded a) membership of the association is voluntary but b) owners are required to pay towards costs of maintenance in accordance with their deeds. However the association is not a legal entity and so cannot take legal action. The trustees could but would need to balance the time and cost of chasing up owners with the amount of money that will be collected. It was noted that buyers' solicitors often contact the association as part of their conveyancing process and the association can, at this point, mention whether the property owes money.

c. Budget for 2024-25

This has been drafted based on the following assumptions:

- 125 owners pay £125
- Road works will be undertaken on Meadway and Third Cliff Walk
- Insurance may need to increase if the DMMO applications are successful

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The treasurer has included a small amount of £250 for legal fees as, over the last 12 months, almost £4,000 worth of legal services have been provided pro- bono by a committee member.

d. Appointment of Auditor

Tony Wakeling was nominated to audit the accounts.

4. Election of the Committee

Nigel Mawditt stood down from the Committee by rotation. NM offered himself for re-election and confirmed that all other committee members were willing to stand. Emma Curryer has also resigned and will not be standing. Norman Nunn agreed to remain co-opted to advise on estate maintenance.

It was proposed to elect Nigel Mawditt as Chair for 2024-25. Votes were cast as follows:

40 in favour

1 against

3 abstentions

The new committee is:

Name	Current position
Nigel Mawditt	Chair
Chris Barette	Treasurer
Chris Leigh	Secretary
Lindsey Blair	Committee member
John Gaylard	Committee member
Neil Grimstone	Committee member
Norman Nunn	Road maintenance

Other resolutions

a) Approve the revised rulebook

Two owners put forward resolutions to change clauses in the rulebook:

John West proposed that clause 5b be deleted - seconded by Rosalyn Grimstone and Tony Wakeling. Votes were cast as follows:

33 against

4 in favour

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Tony Wakeling proposed that clause 14 be amended to reduce approval from £1000 to £250 - there was no seconder so this resolution failed.

Voting to approve the rulebook was as follows:

40 in favour

3 abstentions

b) *Accept the 2023-24 accounts*

Voting to approve the 2023-24 accounts was as follows:

42 in favour

2 abstentions

c) *Retain the maintenance fee at £125k*

Voting to retain the £125 fee was as follows:

39 in favour

5 abstentions

d) *Remove the early payment discount*

Voting to remove the early payment discount was as follows:

35 in favour

8 against

1 abstention

The Committee was thanked for all their voluntary unpaid work.

Payment of subs – by 1st May

By Bank Transfer – the account details are:

o Account name: WEST CLIFF HOUSEOWNERS ASSOCIATION

o Sort Code: 40-13-28

o Account Number: 51381296

o Reference: Your house name/number and road

If you would like confirmation of your payment, email Chris Barette

christopher.barette@gmail.com and let him know that you have made a bank transfer.

By cheque payable to 'WCHOA' and delivered to Chris Barette at 14 West Walk.

In exceptional circumstances you can pay by cheque but please contact Chris first.